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Sustainable development

Prevention of armed conflict

Promotion and protection of human rights

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Strengthening of the United Nations system

Letter dated 24 December 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly

In late 2013, I launched the Human Rights Up Front Initiative to strengthen United Nations prevention, including of serious human rights violations and conflict. Transparency, dialogue and cooperation are guiding principles of the Initiative.

I have referred to the Human Rights Up Front Initiative in many public statements. In addition, the Deputy Secretary-General sought the views of Member States in December 2013 at the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly and in a meeting with them in Geneva in July 2014. I have suggested that he provide another, more detailed briefing on my behalf to the Assembly in January 2016.

The Charter of the United Nations and repeated resolutions by Member States have given guidance to the United Nations system to protect human rights and strengthen prevention. They have also prompted the system to connect its actions across the three pillars of peace and security, development, and human rights.

My Human Rights Up Front Initiative is a major effort to achieve existing prevention mandates through cultural and operational change and engagement with Member States. It is not a human rights tool, but it should lead to the prevention of human rights violations. It is also intended to lead to improved early warning, efficiency, support for national authorities and internal accountability. An initial result is greater recognition among United Nations staff of how problems in the development pillar can affect the human rights and peace and security pillars, and vice versa.

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While the Initiative is internal, its objectives speak to the purposes of the whole United Nations and will be greatly enhanced by support from Member States. The briefing in January is intended to strengthen the dialogue with Member States on the Initiative.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon